

# MISSOURI CONSERVATIONIST

February  
2005

Volume 66  
Issue 2

*Serving Nature & You*



# Vantage Point

## *Catching More Than Fish*

**T**he 2005 trout season begins March 1 and I am excited! No doubt many other Missourians are excited, too. Trout are the third most popular fish among state anglers. Only bass and crappie rank higher.

I enjoy wading in clear streams and working a fly rod for trout. This solitary experience is great, but I also value time spent in Missouri's trout parks. It's a great opportunity to meet and observe interesting and extremely sociable people.

One morning last summer, I rose early and went to Montauk State Park. After purchasing my daily tag, I walked to a favorite spot on the stream and spent a few quiet minutes enjoying the way the Current River seemed to slide through the quiet forest.

Before the opening whistle, a teenage girl with her father and grandfather joined me. It was her first fishing trip, so she listened intently as her Dad explained the rules and gave her a quick lesson on how to catch trout. Her grandfather quietly headed downstream.

A father with a much younger daughter arrived after the whistle blew. She cast awkwardly with a short rod and seemed to tangle her lure in every bush along the stream bank. Dad good-naturedly freed his daughter's lure as they worked to a position across the stream.

A few minutes later, she hooked a nice trout on her little rod. Because the fish was large and her line was light, she and the fish battled for several minutes. I could see her getting frustrated. Finally she exclaimed, "Daddy, I can't do it any more. The fish is hurting me it pulls so hard!"

She persevered though, and the assembled crowd laughed in appreciation when the proud father netted the trout and presented it to his daughter. She caught three more trout that morning, and with each one her dad demonstrated patience and love. His actions seemed to guarantee his child a lifetime of self-esteem and happiness.

I then heard the grandfather from the first family shouting excitedly. He'd hooked a big fish, and everyone nearby stopped to watch as he played it. We cheered his success when the 3-pound trout was safely in his net. It was a great day for both young and old anglers, as well as for amused observers like me.

Through its trout management program, the Conservation Department, in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources' State Parks, helps countless Missourians create memories and forge strong relationships that last a lifetime. In this issue



DAVE MAYERS

**Sabrina Talir and her father, Doug Talir, of Glendale pose with Sabrina's first catch. She used dough bait to catch her rainbow trout. Sabrina was one of many youngsters receiving First Fish Awards at Montauk Trout Park's 2004 Kids Fishing Day.**

(page 10), you'll find the highlights of our new Trout Plan. It promises to further improve what already is some of the best trout fishing in this area of the country.

The new Trout Plan is part of our overall commitment to help Missourians use, enjoy and learn about fish, forest and wildlife resources in diverse and attractive settings.

Watching others fish that day helped me appreciate the true value of fishing to the people of our state. It brought to mind the special fishing, hunting, wildlife watching and hiking experiences I've shared with my children, friends, parents and grandparents. My first grandchild, Samuel Tyler Hoskins, was born in November, and I look forward to enjoying many outdoor adventures with him.

Outdoor experiences create strong bonds among family and friends. Your Department of Conservation invites you to step outside and make some new memories with those special to you.

**John D. Hoskins, Director**

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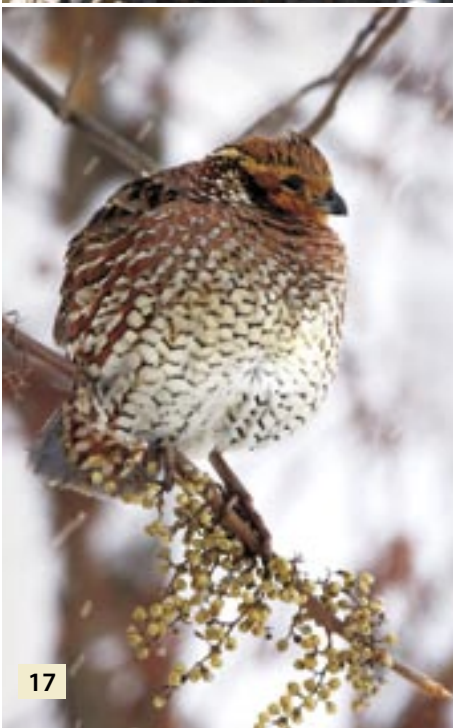
♻️ Printed on recycled paper with soy ink



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**Contact Us:** Web page: <http://www.missouriconservation.org>

**Subscriptions:** free to adult Missouri residents;  
out of state \$7 per year; out of country \$10 per year.

**Send correspondence to:** Circulation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.

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# Reflections

## WOULD IT SELL?

Your answer in the January issue about the folks wanting to get rid of the big walnut tree seemed to me a bit off the mark.

You should at least steer the owner of the tree in the direction of some walnut buyers. It is very possible that a buyer would come in for one tree, especially if the tree is of veneer-quality walnut. We're not talking black oak here.

For Pete's sake, don't tell them to hire a tree remover until they have at least researched the market.

**Gary Blair, via Internet**

## HUNTING EXPERIENCE

My twin 7-year-old boys and I did not get drawn for a waterfowl hunting blind at Fountain Grove on a Saturday this



## FRAGILE FLOWER

Rob Magruder of Anderson took this photo of a delicate frost flower. Frost flowers form when cold air freezes the moisture inside a plant, bursting it open like a water pipe. Air bubbles in the ice make the flower appear white. Frost flowers are delicate and almost weightless. They shatter when touched.

past fall. When one of my sons pulled number 38 (out of 39) on Sunday, it seemed like our luck was going the same way. I told my sons we'd hang around to see if a blind became available, but the crowd started to get pretty thin, and it didn't look good.

Then a gentleman approached and said his group would like to give up their blind for us. He said they had plenty of time to hunt during the 60-day season, but that I needed to get the boys out.

"We need more kids involved," he said.

For someone who doesn't hunt, this might not seem that exciting, but I was so happy I had tears welling in my eyes.

We ended up empty-handed as far as the ducks go, but the three unknown gentlemen reassured me that the sporting tradition is alive and well in Missouri's duck hunting community.

**Tex Rabenau, St. James**

## DRIVING ISSUES

I'm a school bus driver. To make sure we have a nice, quiet ride, I take old issues of the *Missouri Conservationist* to keep the young boys and girls occupied. Thanks for the help.

**Eloise Morgan, Polo**

## BEAGLE MUSIC

Your "Beagle Boogie" article made me reminisce about and reflect on several hunting memories.

I was lucky enough to be raised on a large tract of land in St. Louis County where I could roam freely, oftentimes with an old over/under shotgun. At some impressionable point, when I was under 10 years old, a friend of my parents came over to beagle-hunt.

Both he and the dogs amazed me as they worked the fields and the hedge rows. He would let the dogs know

where he was by whistling. The dogs, working with controlled agitation, would cut-off and turn rabbits right into our path.

What fun!

**Joel Amant, Valley Park**

## LIVING ROOM

The Nodaway Valley art on the cover of your December issue was beautifully done and was a familiar scene to me.

From the agricultural backdrop to the wintry wetlands in the foreground, I found myself gazing into a scene from my very own living room window. Except that my view is of Ten Mile Pond Conservation Area in Mississippi County.

Although I am not an avid duck hunter, I respect and admire the sport, the hunters and the hard work and dedication put into the maintenance and preservation of such a beautiful refuge.

**Michael Bub, East Prairie**

## BIRD STRIKES

Recently a few mockingbirds have come in and "taken over" our entire deck and back yard. They aggressively chase off any and every other bird that tries to feed. Any suggestions?

**Cindy & Tom Wolk, St. Louis**

*Editor's note: According to Conservation Department ornithologist Brad Jacobs, mockingbirds in winter defend territories that usually include fruit bearing shrubs and trees. If a bird feeder happens to be within the defended territory, they will battle all invaders. Removing the fruit trees and shrubs would solve the problem. A better suggestion might be to move the feeders away from the defended area, or just enjoy the antics of the mockingbirds.*

*The letters printed here reflect readers' opinions about the Conservationist and its contents. Space limitations prevent us from printing all letters, but we welcome signed comments from our readers. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.*

# Ask the Ombudsman



**Q:** Do skunks hibernate?

**A:** While skunks become inactive as temperatures get cold, I didn't find anything that said they truly hibernate. "The Wild Mammals of Missouri" by Charles Schwartz states, "(skunks) are active until the temperature nears freezing, when the females start to become drowsy. Males continue their activities until the temperature reaches about 15 degrees F, when they too become dormant. During the periods of stupor, the body temperature of both sexes does not become lowered as in the cases of most truly hibernating mammals, and sleep is usually intermittent. Depending upon the weather conditions adults seldom remain inactive for more than one month, but young skunks may be dormant for as much as four months."

The text goes on to mention large numbers of skunks using the same den in the winter. As many as 20 skunks have been found in one winter den.

This is the time of year when skunks will become more active. As temperatures warm, they will be seeking mates, and you'll start to see more roadkills along the highways. Unfortunately, they may also make a nuisance of themselves during this time of year by taking up residence in locations that you may deem unsuitable.

The Conservation Department has an excellent publication on nuisance skunk control. It can be found on the Department web site at <[www.missouriconservation.org/documents/landown/wild/nuisance/skunk.pdf](http://www.missouriconservation.org/documents/landown/wild/nuisance/skunk.pdf)>.

*Ombudsman Ken Drenon will respond to your questions, suggestions or complaints concerning Conservation Department programs. Write him at P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180, call him at 573/522-4115, ext. 3848, or e-mail him at <[Ken.drenon@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Ken.drenon@mdc.mo.gov)>.*

Official State Paper Service

### Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title <b>MISSOURI CONSERVATIONIST</b>	2. Publication Number <b>7354-960</b>	3. Filing Date <b>10/01/04</b>
4. Issue Frequency <b>monthly</b>	5. Number of Issues Published Annually <b>12</b>	6. Annual Subscription Price <b>\$7.00</b>
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4) <b>Mo. Dept. of Conservation P.O. Box 180 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180</b>		
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer) <b>Missouri Department of Conservation P.O. Box 180 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180</b>		
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (do not leave blank) <b>Missouri Department of Conservation P.O. Box 180 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180</b>		
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address.) <b>Ken Drenon P.O. Box 180 Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180</b>		
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> None		
12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months <input type="checkbox"/> Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)		

PS Form 3526, October 1999 (See Instructions on Reverse)

13. Publication Title <b>Missouri Conservationist</b>	14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below <b>10/01/04</b>
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)	480,000
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	
(1) Paid (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	0
(2) In-Country to Dealers on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	0
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Mail Distribution	0
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	126
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1), (2), (3), and (4))	126
d. Free Distribution by Mail	
(1) In-Country to Dealers on Form 3541	0
(2) In-Country to Subscribers on Form 3541	0
(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)	100
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e)	100
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f)	226
h. Copies not Distributed	2,000
i. Total (Sum of 15g and 15h)	2,226
j. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c, divided by 12; times 100)	5%
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership	
(1) Publication required. Will be printed in the February 2005 issue of this publication.	<input type="checkbox"/> Publication not required.
(2) Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner	Date <b>10/28/04</b>

17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

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- If the publisher has Periodicals Publications as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published: it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.
- In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
- Item 17 must be signed.

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PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Revised)

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The Missouri Conservationist (ISSN 0026-6515) is the official monthly publication of the Missouri Department of Conservation, 2901 West Truman Boulevard, Jefferson City, MO (Mailing address: P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102.) Subscription free to adult Missouri residents; out of state \$7 per year; out of country \$10 per year. Notification of address change must include both old and new address (send mailing label with the subscriber number on it) with 60-day notice. Preferred periodical postage paid at Jefferson City, Mo., and at additional entry offices. Postmaster: Send correspondence to Circulation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180. Phone: 573/751-4115. Copyright © 2004 by the Conservation Commission of the State of Missouri.



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Printed in USA

# paddlefishing

BY TRISH YASGER AND MIKE BAYLESS, PHOTOS BY CLIFF WHITE

**PADDLEFISH**, one of America's largest freshwater fish, are popular among many Missouri anglers. These fish can weigh more than 100 pounds. The current Missouri state record paddlefish, caught in 2002 on the James River Arm of Table Rock Lake, weighed 139-pounds, 4-ounces.

*Saltwater gear  
is the norm for  
Missouri's biggest  
game fish.*



Paddlefishing requires simple, but strong, rigging.

Paddlefish, also known as spoonbill, have a long, paddle-shaped rostrum that accounts for about one-third of their body length. Paddlefish are cartilaginous, which means that they have no bones. They have small eyes and no scales. They are filter feeders, and they spend most of their lives in open water eating microscopic animals called zooplankton. During warm weather they can often be seen jumping from the water.

Paddlefish require specific flows, temperatures and substrate to reproduce. Spawning is triggered by a combination of daylight, water temperature, and water flow. When water temperatures climb between 50–55 degrees and spring rains cause the rivers to rise, paddlefish migrate upstream to spawn. Male paddlefish reach sexual maturity at 4–5 years and make spawning runs annually. Females reach sexual maturity at 8–10 years and make spawning runs every 2–3 years.



Most snaggers cast out and retrieve their hooks with frequent sweeps of the rod. Anglers also troll for the big fish, letting the boat do most of the work.





**Once you hook a fish, you'd better hold on tight.**

In the past, paddlefish were abundant in Missouri, but their numbers declined because of dams, increased contaminant levels, and the illegal harvest of adult paddlefish for caviar.

Paddlefish are native to the Mississippi, Missouri and Osage river basins in Missouri. In 1972, the Missouri Department of Conservation established a paddlefish population in Table Rock Lake by stocking hatchery-produced fingerlings. Paddlefish fisheries in Table Rock, Truman and Lake of the Ozarks are maintained by annually stocking hatchery produced fingerlings that are 10-12 inches long.

To accomplish this, the Department collects paddlefish brood stock in the spring at Table Rock Lake. Paddlefish are spawned at Blind Pony Hatchery in Sweet Springs, and the young are raised until September, when they are large enough to release. Paddlefish stocking and management are directed by a statewide paddlefish management plan developed by the Conservation Department. The goal of this plan is to manage paddlefish statewide as a trophy sport fishery.

### Catching paddlefish

Because they are filter feeders, the most popular and dependable way to catch paddlefish is by snagging.

Anglers harvest paddlefish by snagging during a 45-day snagging season that runs March 15 through April 30.

Successful snagging depends primarily on water temperature and flow. Early in the season, smaller male paddlefish comprise the bulk of the harvest. As flows and water temperatures increase, the fish move upstream, and the number of larger females increases.

When lakes and rivers are rising, there can be a lot of logs and other debris in the water. Snaggers and other boaters need to watch out for these hazards.

### Table Rock Lake

On Table Rock Lake, most snagging occurs in the upper reaches of the James River Arm, within 3 miles of Flat Creek near Point 15. During high-water years, fish and snaggers can go further up the James River.

Public accesses include Cape Fair and Bridge Port accesses.

### Truman Lake

On Truman Lake, paddlefish make spawning runs up the Osage River Arm into the Marais des Cygnes River.

Early in the season, snagging is good above the Talley Bend Access and near Osceola. As water temperatures and flow increase, paddlefish move upstream toward the Roscoe and Taberville accesses. You can also find paddlefish in the lower Sac River.

During years of high water, snagging can also be good in the Marais des Cygnes River up to the Kansas border. Snagging is primarily done from boat, but some anglers snag from the banks at public access areas and bridge right-of-ways.

Public ramps include Talley Bend, Brush Creek, Crowes Crossing, City of Osceola, Highway 83, Roscoe, Taberville and Old Town accesses.

### Lake of the Ozarks

Most of the snagging and harvest occurs in deep pools on the upper 40 miles of the Osage River Arm.

Early in the season, snagging is good in the Ivy Bend/Coffman Bend area near the 50 mile marker and above. As water temperatures and flows increase, paddlefish move upstream toward Truman Dam. However, snagging is not permitted from Truman Dam downstream to the Highway 65 Bridge. Snagging is popular in the Niangua Arm between the mouth of the Little Niangua Arm and the Highway 54 Bridge.

Public ramps include Bledsoe Ferry, Warsaw Harbor, Brown's Bend and Larry Gale accesses. Boater can also launch for a fee at one of the numerous private ramps on the lake.

# getting hooked up

*How to set up your tackle to catch a paddlefish*



Create a loop in the heavy line using an overhand knot. Thread the loop through the sinker and pull it tight.



Double the line about 2 feet above the sinker and run it through the hook eye and pull it tight.



Loop the line below the hook, bring the loop over the treble points and tighten it on the shank.



Repeat the last step, but finish with a loop around only one of the hook points. This rigging keeps hooks from dangling.

## Osage River

Snagging occurs for a few miles below the Highway 54 Bridge, about 1.3 miles downstream from Bagnell Dam. The area between Highway 54 and Bagnell Dam is closed to snagging. Paddlefish are also taken in the lower 25 miles of the Osage River.

Public ramps can be found at Bagnell Dam, Pike's Camp, Mari-Osa and Bonnots Mill accesses.

## Paddlefishing Equipment

Typical snagging gear includes a stiff, 6- to 7-foot rod equipped with a level-wind saltwater reel spooled with 100-pound test (or heavier) braided line. Some snaggers choose 7- to 9-foot, medium-heavy action surf rods and large-frame, large-capacity spinning reels. This combination allows more play than the standard snagging rig, which typically is as stiff as a broom stick.

Attach a large, teardrop-shaped, 8- to 16-ounce sinker to the end of the line. Use the heavier weights in deep water or where there is current. Use lighter weights

in slack water or when the fish seem to be suspended, instead of close to the bottom. Bank anglers also tend to use lighter weights.

Attach No. 8 to No. 14 treble hooks to the line. Anglers usually use two hooks, one about 18–24 inches above the weight, and the other 2 feet farther up. Rigging so that the hook or hooks ride upright helps you hook more fish. (See “getting hooked up” on Page 7.)

Have plenty of extra hooks and weights in the boat because you will lose a few. Many snaggers pour their own weights. It's cheaper than buying them.

Heavy line doesn't break easily. You will probably have to wrap your line around the handle on a paddle or gaff and use the boat's power to free stuck hooks. Be careful at this because when the line breaks, you might be thrown off balance.

Bring leather gloves. They give you a better grip and protect your hands from the line.

Landing gaffs are useful. You can land small fish by hand, but the large hooks require extra caution.



Big fish can be dangerous at boatside, even for biologists studying them. Bring rope to secure fish too large to bring aboard.

Paddlefish tend to roll, often at the side or on the floor of the boat.

Heavy needle-nose pliers are a must. You will need them to remove hooks from the fish's tough skin and to reshape bent hooks.

Small metal files are important, too. Out of the box, some large hooks aren't sharp enough for snagging. Sharpen hooks before snagging and resharpen throughout the day.

You also need some way to measure the fish. Length limits vary across the state. Paddlefish length is measured from the eye to the fork of the tail.

Bring along short pieces of heavy nylon or cotton rope, cut into 4-5 foot lengths, to tie fish too big for livewells alongside the boat.

### ***How to Snag for Paddlefish***

A boat with a depthfinder is probably the most useful tool for a paddlefish snagger. Usually, paddlefish stay near the bottom, often congregating in deep holes near dropoffs. Paddlefish display as large images on most modern depth finders. Good electronics also help you stay in the main channel and avoid most underwater obstacles.

It's sometimes possible to "troll" for paddlefish. Let out enough line so the hooks are a good distance from the boat and you can feel the sinker hitting the bottom. Troll just fast enough to keep the slack out of your line.

When snagging for paddlefish, use a sweeping motion, swinging the rod toward the boat and then releasing it back in the other direction, preventing excessive slack in the line. Use your legs and back to lessen arm fatigue.

Some anglers prefer to snag from set locations on the bank. For the most part, the equipment is the same as that used in boat snagging. It is important to use a rod that allows you to cast your hooks a long way from the bank. A sweeping motion jerks the hook through the water, followed by reeling to take up slack from the jerk. Several of the areas mentioned above are traditional haunts for bank snaggers and allow good open access to the water.

Whether you cast or troll, set the drag so you can barely pull line off the spool with your hand. It should be tight enough that it won't slip when you jerk or come into contact with a fish, but loose enough that it will



**The paddlefish season brings deep-sea fishing thrills to Missouri anglers.**

disengage if you get hung up or when a large fish makes a run.

You must possess a valid fishing permit if you are snagging or driving the boat being used. Once you have taken two legal paddlefish into your possession, you cannot continue snagging for any other species of fish that day.

### ***Preparing Your Catch***

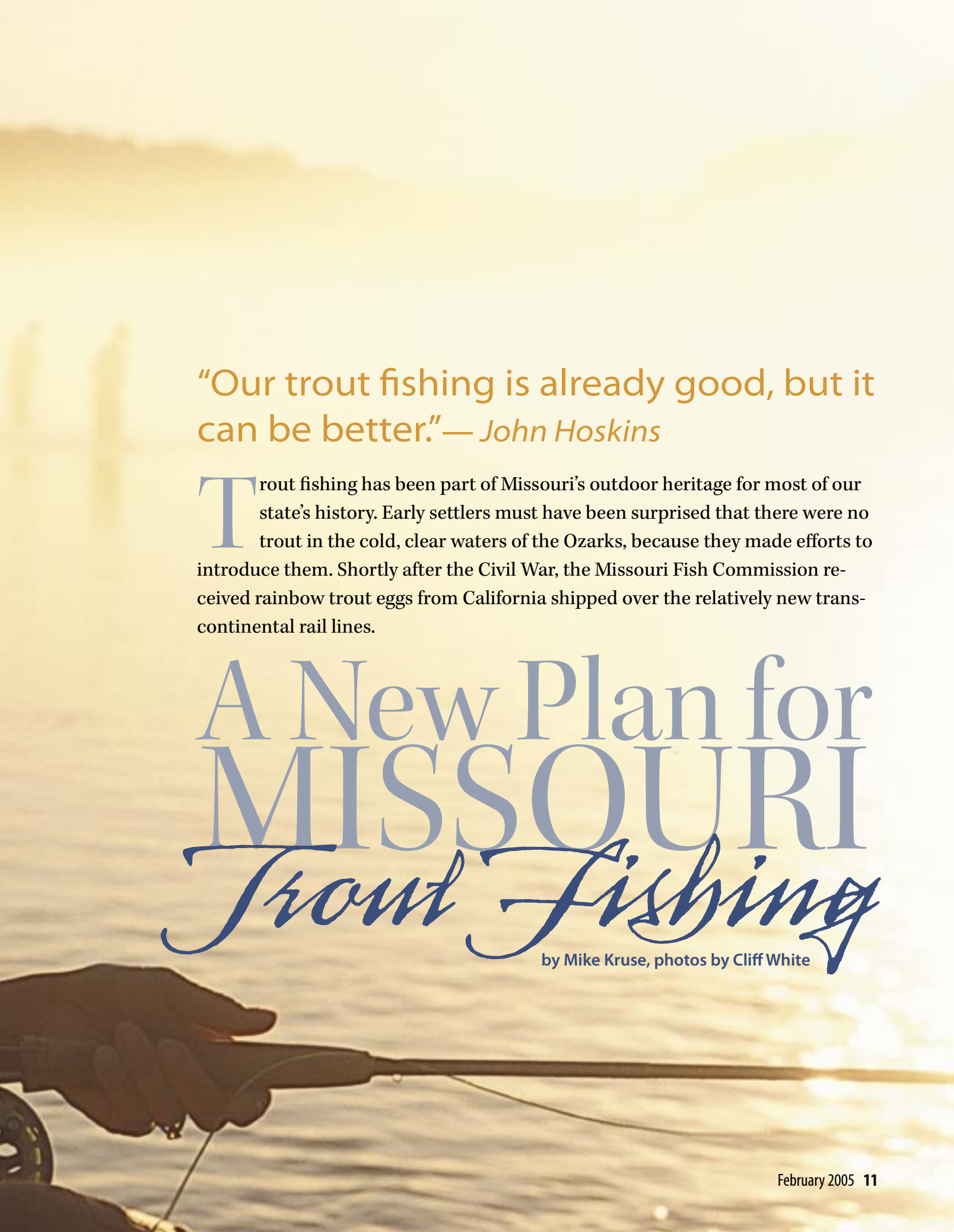
To clean a paddlefish, hang the fish by its rostrum (nose) at a convenient height and cut in a circle through the meat above the tail down to the tough lining of the notochord. This cartilage is the backbone of a paddlefish and has the texture of dry silicone. Rotate the tail back and forth to break the outer lining of the notochord, then pull downward to remove its outer end. This will let blood drain from the fish.

Next, start behind the gill cover and cut in toward the casing of the notochord. You will now be able to slice fillets off the fish by moving the knife toward the tail, along the notochord lining on both sides of the fish.

With the fillets skin-side down on a sturdy board, slice the flesh free from the skin. Also remove the V-shaped piece of red or dark meat that runs down the center of the fillet.

Rinse and soak your catch in saltwater until you are ready to cook it. You can batter and deep-fry paddlefish pieces, or cut the fillets into 1-inch thick "steaks" and cook them on the grill. Paddlefish flesh is very firm and contains enough fat that it will not dry out on the grill as quickly as most fish. Try soaking the steaks in your favorite marinade or covering them with lemon pepper before grilling. ▲



A hand holding a fishing rod against a sunset background. The hand is in the lower left, holding the rod which extends horizontally across the frame. The background is a warm, golden sunset over water, with a fishing reel visible in the bottom left corner.

“Our trout fishing is already good, but it can be better.” — *John Hoskins*

**T**ROUT fishing has been part of Missouri’s outdoor heritage for most of our state’s history. Early settlers must have been surprised that there were no trout in the cold, clear waters of the Ozarks, because they made efforts to introduce them. Shortly after the Civil War, the Missouri Fish Commission received rainbow trout eggs from California shipped over the relatively new trans-continental rail lines.

# A New Plan for MISSOURI *Trout Fishing*

by Mike Kruse, photos by Cliff White

Since 1880, Missouri anglers have enjoyed the excitement of trout leaping from cold, rushing streams. In the early years, however, fishing demand kept trout populations low. By the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps was helping to construct hatcheries to add more trout to streams. This began the modern era of trout management.

Missouri's trout program gradually expanded and diversified, and now provides a wide range of fishing opportunities. Around some of our largest springs (Bennett, Montauk, Roaring River and Maramec) are "trout parks" where anglers enjoy daily stockings of rainbow trout in easily-accessible areas.

Outside the trout parks are areas which are less intensively stocked and fished. Also, there are streams that support brown trout, or even wild, self-sustaining populations of rainbow trout. The cold waters of Lake Taneycomo are famous for producing trophy trout. City-dwelling anglers can enjoy winter trout fishing in a number of lakes and ponds in urban areas.

Providing trout fishing is not simple. The supply of trout from Missouri's hatcheries is limited. Natural reproduction of trout is even more limited. Less than 1 percent of our permanent streams are cold enough to sustain trout year-round. Even so, trout are popular with anglers and support up to 15 percent of all Missouri fishing.

To guide our management efforts, the Missouri Conservation Commission approved "A Plan For

Missouri Trout Fishing" in October 2003. The plan declares that the goal of trout management in the state is to "provide anglers with diverse, quality trout fishing opportunities consistent with overall sound management of our state's aquatic life."

The plan, which contains ideas and direction from many of Missouri's trout anglers, as well as Department staff and employees from other agencies, creates clear goals and priorities for Missouri trout management. It also outlines the tasks necessary to achieve these goals.

Important components of the new trout management plan include renovating Missouri's trout hatcheries and increasing hatchery production by 20 percent.

Parts of the trout hatchery system that the Civilian Conservation Corps built in the 1930s are still in use. Comprehensive renovations have not been done at any Department trout hatchery since 1978.

Shepherd of the Hills Hatchery, at the base of Table Rock Dam, is Missouri's largest trout producer and holds the greatest potential for expansion. James Civiello, hatchery manager at Shepherd of the Hills, said that expanding the facility will dramatically improve the hatchery's ability to produce both brown and rainbow trout.

"A new dissolved oxygen system will help us grow more trout with our existing water supply while improving the quality of the water we release into Lake Taneycomo," Civiello said.

Managers at Missouri's four other trout hatcheries

look forward to similar improvements.

Renovating hatcheries is necessary to produce not only more trout, but to improve the quality of trout. Fisheries Unit Chief Kevin Richards said the new goal is to produce rainbow trout that average 12.5 inches for all waters the Department stocks.

"Additional hatchery production also is needed so we're not forced to continually operate at maximum capacity as we do now," Coldwater Hatcheries Supervisor George Kromrey said. "Improvements will create some reserve capacity that we can use when unex-



Many Missouri trout waters, including our four trout parks, receive hatchery-raised fish.





**Hatchery improvements will allow more trout production.**

pected losses occur and help ensure an uninterrupted supply of trout for stocking.”

## New Trout Regulations

The new trout plan also calls for new management area designations and regulations. These will become effective on March 1.

Trout Parks at Bennett Spring, Montauk, Maramec and Roaring River will be managed much as they’ve been in the past. However, two changes to statewide regulations will improve angling in the parks. First, the daily limit for trout has been reduced from five to four. The possession limit will be reduced from 10 to eight. Although these changes may reduce the harvest for some anglers, they will help spread the harvest among more anglers and create more successful fishing trips.

Second, the minimum length limit for brown trout caught from most streams, including the trout parks, will be 15 inches. In some waters, the minimum length limit for all trout will be 18 inches. Brown trout have the potential to grow large, but in the past, many browns in trout parks were harvested before they achieved their growth potential.

No changes are planned for winter catch-and-release fishing at the trout parks. All four parks will be open for catch-and-release fishing from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, from the second Friday in November through the second Sunday in February. A trout permit is required for fishing during the winter catch and release season.

“Blue Ribbon Trout Areas” will be waters with the best habitat quality or self-sustaining populations of trout. Fishing regulations will include an 18-inch minimum length limit on all trout, and a daily limit of one trout. Fishing will be restricted to flies and artificial lures only. Giggling of non-game fish will not be



## BLUE RIBBON TROUT AREAS \*

### Stocked Areas:

- North Fork of the White River (Ozark County, Rainbow Spring to Patrick Bridge)
- Eleven Point River (Oregon County, Greer Spring to Turner Mill Access)
- Current River (Dent and Shannon counties, Montauk to Cedar Grove)

### Wild Areas:

- Little Piney Creek (Phelps County, Phelps/Dent County line to Milldam Hollow access)
- Barren Fork Creek (Shannon County, County Rd. AD to Sinking Creek)
- Crane Creek (Stone County, Upstream from Quail Spur Rd. Crossing)
- Mill Creek (Phelps county, Yelton Spring to Little Piney Creek)
- Spring Creek (Phelps County, Relfe Spring to Big Piney River)
- Blue Springs Creek (Crawford County, Blue Springs to Maramec River)



## RED RIBBON TROUT AREAS \*

- Maramec River (Phelps and Ozark counties, Highway 8 to Scotts Ford Access)
- Roubidoux Creek (Pulaski County, lower 2.2 miles)
- North Fork of the White River (Ozark County, Patrick Bridge to Norfork Lakel)



## WHITE RIBBON TROUT AREAS \*

- Current River (Dent County and Shannon counties, downstream from Cedar Grove)
- Little Piney Creek (Phelps County, Milldam Hollow Access to County Road 7360)
- Niangua River (Dallas and Laclede counties, Bennett Spring to Prosperine Access)
- Capps Creek (Newton County, lower 2.3 miles)
- Eleven Point River (Oregon County, downstream from Turner Mill Access)
- Roaring River (Barry County, Roaring River State Park to Table Rock Lake)
- Roubidoux Creek (Roubidoux Spring downstream 0.9 miles)
- Stone Mill Spring (entire spring branch)\*\*
- Hickory Creek (Newton County, Highway 86 Bridge to Shoal Creek)

\* Consult the Wildlife Code for a complete listing of area boundaries and regulations.

\*\* Catch and release from November 1 through February 28



Missouri's trout management areas are shown in orange. See box on facing page for the type of management of each area.

permitted. These restrictive regulations are designed to sustain the maximum density of adult trout and offer the chance to harvest a trophy-sized trout. Larger Blue Ribbon streams will be stocked. Smaller ones will be managed for wild, naturally-reproducing rainbow trout.

"Red Ribbon Trout Areas" will be areas that are also high quality trout habitat, but where habitat or water temperature deficiencies limit trout survival or growth. There is a 15-inch minimum length limit on trout from these streams, and a daily limit of two trout. Some areas will be restricted to flies and artificial lures only. Giggling of non-game fish will be permitted. These streams will provide good catch-and-release fishing and a chance to harvest quality-size trout.

"White Ribbon Trout Areas" will be established in a number of coldwater streams that can support trout all year. The new statewide daily limit of four trout and new minimum length limit of 15 inches on brown trout will apply in these streams. There is no length limit on rainbow trout. All types of flies, lures and bait will be permitted. Giggling of non-game fish will be permitted.



Most of Missouri's trout are hatchery raised, but some streams contain wild, naturally reproducing rainbows.



Brown trout regulations are designed to provide anglers a better chance to tangle with a big fish.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOSEPH R. TOMELLERI

At Stone Mill Spring Branch, from November 1 through February 28, only catch-and-release fishing using artificial lures and flies will be permitted. Anglers must possess a trout permit to fish there. In future years, similar winter catch-and-release rules will be established at other White Ribbon Trout Areas. These areas will provide great opportunities to catch and harvest trout, the occasional chance to harvest a large trout and additional opportunities for winter catch-and-release fishing.

Because of high angling pressure, regular stocking will continue at Lake Taneycomo. To help support these stocking efforts, a trout permit will be required for all anglers fishing upstream of the U.S. Highway 65 bridge on Lake Taneycomo. A trout permit still is required to possess trout below the Highway 65 Bridge. No other changes to fishing regulations on Lake Taneycomo and its tributaries have been made, except that the daily limit of four trout will apply.

"We wanted to make our trout regulations as consistent as possible," said Protection Unit Chief Terry Roberson. "Also, we thought long and hard before reducing the limit from five to four, but we concluded it would help spread out the harvest and create more successful trout anglers."

This change was broadly supported by anglers during public meetings conducted in 2003 to discuss the future of trout management in Missouri.

## New Trout Fishing Opportunities

One of the most difficult tasks directed by the trout plan is to acquire more areas for anglers to fish.

Steve Eder, the Department's Fisheries Division Administrator, said, "The Department of Conservation only acquires land from willing sellers, and the limited number of coldwater streams creates few purchase opportunities. Nonetheless, we have made acquisition of new trout waters, through purchase, easement or partnerships a high priority."

A great example of a partnership is the new "White Ribbon" trout area on Hickory Creek, created through an agreement with the City of Neosho. Hickory Creek has held a few trout, but the Department plans to begin regular stocking there during 2005.

New winter trout fishing opportunities also have been created in city park lakes in

Columbia, Jackson and Jefferson City. Trout stocked in these lakes are reared in private hatcheries, and the Department shares the cost of purchasing and stocking with local communities.

Ultimately, "A Plan for Missouri Trout Fishing" has three priorities: to create more successful trout fishing trips, to more equitably distribute trout harvest among anglers and to provide more trout fishing opportunities.

For more information about "A Plan for Missouri Trout Fishing," or about trout fishing opportunities in Missouri, visit our website at: <[www.missouriconservation.org/fish/sport/trout/](http://www.missouriconservation.org/fish/sport/trout/)>.

As Conservation Department Director John Hoskins said, "We want to provide the best possible trout fishing here in Missouri." ▲



The new trout plan promises larger trout and better fishing.

A photograph of a quail perched on a branch with clusters of small yellow berries. The background is a soft-focus winter scene with snow and bare branches. The quail has brown and white mottled plumage with a distinctive yellow and black striped head.

# Wood <sup>is</sup> Good *Even for Quail!*

One day a year with a chainsaw  
can boost quail numbers on  
your property.

by Brian Schweiss  
photos by Jim Rathert



Increased sunlight stimulates the growth of soft mast sources, like gooseberry (top) and aromatic sumac.

Quail and woodlands are seldom mentioned together. We usually think of quail habitat as open land, consisting of grass or crops and field borders. However, many landowners own some woods along with these classic quail cover types. It's possible to manage these woodlands to benefit quail. In fact, research has shown that some of the best quail habitat is a mixture of woods, grassland, brushy areas and cropland.

From a quail's point of view, the trouble with woodlands is that they often have dense canopies and open understories. These do not provide much cover. When properly managed, however, woodlands can provide escape cover from predators, winter cover, loafing areas, and food sources for quail. The same woodland management will also benefit you in the form of timber sales.

The distribution and arrangement of various habitat components is what makes them useful to quail. If the components are concentrated in large blocks, they won't have as much impact as smaller grass and crop fields mixed with small or narrow woodlots.

Any woodland management practice that thins the forest can help enhance the food and cover needs for quail and increase forest health. One such practice is Timber Stand Improvement. A TSI is typically done where trees are too small to sell. It improves growing conditions for desirable trees by removing trees with poor form or poor growth characteristics.

Another option is a timber sale. A selective harvest thins the forest in a manner similar to that of a timber stand improvement. In selective harvest, you remove only those trees large enough to produce lumber or other wood products. Trees can also be harvested in clumps, creating small openings or clearcuts. These are called regeneration cuts.

Timber sales usually result in access trails and decking areas where the harvester sorts and stacks the cut trees before hauling them to the mill.

If maintained as permanent open cover, these areas make excellent weedy areas. They also can be converted to food plots for quail. Winter wheat, lespedeza, and clover can be planted as additional food sources. Roads can be planted to suitable grasses for quail.

## *Thinnings*

Thinning the forest, either by selective harvest or TSI practice, produces similar results for quail. It allows more sunlight to reach the forest floor.

Many plants beneficial to quail will take advantage of the sunlight provided by the removal of selected trees. Tick trefoil, also known as beggar's lice, usually springs

up. It produces seed that quail and other birds eat throughout the summer and winter. Soft mast producing plants, such as blackberries, raspberries, and gooseberries, also thrive and provide summer and fall foods.

These plants, along with sumac, hazelnut and many others, also provide thick cover to protect quail from predators. A good rule of thumb is that any plant that sticks to you, scratches you and makes it difficult to move through the woods is good for quail. They even eat poison ivy berries.

### *Small Openings and Clearcuts*

If done in the right places and in sufficient quantities, removing all the trees from an area can benefit quail. These new openings quickly fill with plants that provide food for quail. Clearcutting regenerates new forests while benefiting a variety of wildlife. New clearcuts provide abundant food and cover. However, it's important to know that the value of a clearcut to quail diminishes as the plant community changes.

If you cut all your trees at once, you might fall into the “boom and bust” quail population trap. Your clearcut will provide wonderful habitat for only four or five

## **STAGES OF A CLEARCUT**

### **Years 1 – 2**

Excellent food sources become available. Numerous plants, such as tick trefoil, grasses, partridge pea, ragweed and blackberries, begin growing. Remaining tree seedlings are the foundation of the forest that will regenerate on that site. Treetops left after the harvest provide a tangled maze of cover.

### **Year 3**

Food sources are still present, and tree seedlings occupy more space. Good escape cover from predators is present. This stage also provides good winter cover. Quail benefit from the combination of herbaceous growth, thickets, shrubs and treetops because it provides cover and emergency food sources during times of heavy snow.

### **Years 4 – 5**

Good escape cover and food sources exist, but as trees grow, they begin to shade out the shrubs and herbaceous vegetation.

### **Years 6 – 10**

Trees form a canopy and shade out the ground cover. Food sources become increasingly scarce at this point, but a forest of this age still provides some thick canopy and dense growth for escape cover.

It's difficult for hunters to find quail in these areas, but it's also hard for hawks and other predators to find them.



Quail benefit when you open up the forest floor by cutting down trees.





years. Then, its value to quail declines rapidly.

Re-establishing habitat on relatively young clearcuts is difficult due to the high number of small trees. A better alternative would be to make small clearcuts in different locations every three to five years. This provides sustained habitat for quail and a steady income from the sale of timber.

Where you cut is also important. An opening in the middle of a large woodlot may benefit other wildlife, but it will do little for quail. A clearcut in narrow woodlots, with suitable grassland and cropland on both sides, would connect these two open land cover types with thick cover and food sources beneficial to quail.

When landowners want brushy cover but don't have marketable trees, they can modify woodland edges to provide winter and escape cover. Felling all the trees along the edge and 30 feet into the woods allows the edge to grow up like a clearcut. This is called edge feathering. You can cut 50 feet or 50 yards along the woods, depending on how enthusiastically you run the chainsaw.

You may be tempted to do this for the entire woodland edge around a field. Avoid falling into that "boom and bust" trap of quail management by cutting a little every other year to maintain all of the stages over time.

Edge feathering along cropfields has the added benefit of increasing crop yields. Large trees take up moisture that could otherwise help your corn or soybeans grow. Cutting trees along the edge reduces competition for moisture, increasing crop yields. Selective cutting along the edge also improves the growth of the remaining trees, making them more valuable in future timber sales.

### *Help is available*

A forester or private land conservationist can help you decide whether to implement timber stand improvement, selective harvest, clearcutting, edge-feathering, or some combination of these timber management practices.

Much of your decision making will have to do with your woodland's potential. For example, certain areas may contain poor quality trees that are excellent for edge feathering. Wooded draws consisting primarily of elm, honey locust and pin oak may be good candidates for TSI or clearcutting. You may have some nice white oak, red oak, and walnut that should be left alone because they have long-range market potential.

Most quail management practices cost money, but blending them with woodland management may provide income and boost your quail numbers. Your best source of information about programs and assistance available to landowners is your nearest Conservation Department office. ▲



**M**any Missourians are taking vacations a little closer to home this year. Those who might have traveled to Florida or the Gulf Coast are rediscovering Missouri's natural beauty and the bounty of its diverse landscapes.

Missouri has a wide range of camping destinations. The state has many privately run campgrounds, and the federal government offers camping in areas managed by the Corps of Engineers, the National Park Service, and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources manages Missouri's state parks, which offer a variety of camping opportunities, from tent camping to motor home sites



with water and electrical hookups.

You also can camp on many areas owned by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Conservation areas offer only primitive style camping with no hookups and few amenities. They appeal to campers who really do want to get away from it all.

People like camping for different reasons. Some use it to escape the complications of modern life. Others simply enjoy sleeping outdoors. Some folks travel in RVs and camp as a lifestyle. Some campers may spend a single night out in the tent, but a backpacker may spend a week or more on a trip. The "deer camp" is a favorite event for many Missouri hunters.

In general, camping gets you closer to beautiful misty rivers, elusive bucks, leaf-covered trails, and our treasured natural heritage.

When Missouri voters approved the Conservation Sales Tax in 1976, they wanted more outdoor recreational opportunities. Although hunting and fishing is a primary use

# Conservation Camping

by Barry Rabe  
photography by Cliff White

**Prime camping opportunities await you on many Conservation Department areas**



for some conservation lands, camping also helps connect people to our fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

There are two main types of camping available at conservation areas: “Designated” camping areas and “Open” camping areas. Designated camping areas are maintained specifically for camping. Designated camping is divided into “Designated Primitive” and “Designated Improved.” The difference between these two is that improved areas have individual campsites, rather than just a general camping area. Designated camping areas may have picnic tables or grills. Not all designated camping areas have restrooms. There is no reservation system to camp in these areas, but they are seldom crowded, except during some hunting seasons.

“Open” camping means that there are no designated camping areas or sites. The primary rule for open camping is that campsites must be at least 100 yards from parking lots and roads. This camping category is great for those campers who want a more adventurous experience than can be found at designated camping areas.



**Cooking outdoors improves the taste of any food. Be careful with fire.**

**Camping gets you closer to beautiful, misty rivers, elusive bucks, leaf-covered trails and our treasured natural heritage.**



**Campers at Thomas Hill Reservoir in Macon County enjoy scenery and seclusion.**

Group size is limited to 10 people for camping on conservation lands, unless you obtain a special use permit. Smaller groups are recommended to reduce impacts on camping areas and to respect other campers. A four-person group is recommended for backcountry travel. In case of emergency, two people can go for help while one stays with the injured person.

Camper-vans, pickup trucks and tent camping are the most popular camping units on conservation lands. Vehicles much larger than a full size van are usually not recommended. This is due to the width and quality of some of the rural roads where these areas are located. Larger vehicles may not be able to turn around in some of the back roads and turnouts.

Beginning campers should probably camp in a designated camping area. Designated area camping allows you to set up a campsite near your vehicle. This means you do not have to own a backpack. You can simply bring your pillow and a good sleeping bag and pad.

Also plan for whatever the weather might bring, and check the forecast before you leave. Practice setting up a new tent a few times before your trip to avoid frustration in the field. Don't wait until dark to set up the tent.

You may have trouble sleeping in a strange new environment, but many people claim to have experienced the best sleep of their lives during a rainy night in a waterproof tent. A leaky tent, on the other hand, creates nothing but misery. Take care of your tent, and never put it away if it is still damp. Also use good stakes. I have seen more than one tent blowing like a kite across a campground, lofted by an unexpected breeze.

Where permitted, campfires are great places to socialize. After

dinner, build the flames up a little and listen as the conversation builds with the fire. Small fires take less fuel and are easier to control and put out. A candle lantern is great for lighting when fires are not permitted. Check bulletin boards for specific regulations that apply to the area.

Make absolutely sure to control your fires at all times. Make sure it is “dead out,” with no smoke or embers, before you break camp. Remove all litter, and don’t leave anything, even a small piece of foil from a candy wrapper, in a fire ring. From my own experience I can tell you that most shoes and boots are assembled with hot glue which, when heated, turns back into glue. Keep your shoes away from the fire!

Camp at least 100 feet from streams. Missouri streams, especially those in the Ozarks, can rise very quickly from rainstorms far upstream. The Jack’s Fork has risen more than 10 feet in one hour! Look closely for signs of previous high water marks, such as clumps of dead leaves stuck in willow branches, and try to camp above these markers. You may be surprised at how high flood waters can reach.

If you do camp on a gravel bar, place a stick at the water’s edge that will be visible from your tent so that you can monitor changes in the river level. The river is one of the best places to camp, but it can be deadly if you are not prepared.

Always take care in selecting your campsite. Erect your tent on level ground to keep moisture out of your tent and to keep your nylon sleeping bag from sliding off of your sleeping pad. Don’t set up your tent under dead tree limbs. These may break off and fall, causing injury or even death.

Some campers may choose to pursue a more rugged type of camping in the backcountry. This requires carrying everything that you need in



**Backpacking campers at Rocky Creek Conservation Area in Shannon County.**

a pack on your back. Backpacking is the next best thing to living outdoors.

Basic backpacking necessities include good boots, backpack, tent or tarp, sleeping bag and pad, and a pack stove. Any of this gear can have critical effects on the quality of your trip, so each piece of gear should be of the highest quality.

Every good camper has a different way to enjoy camping. The important thing is to get outside and have fun! For information about specific conservation areas, try the On-line Atlas at <[www.missouriconservation.org](http://www.missouriconservation.org)>. You can also call the nearest Conservation Department office. Regulations governing camping on Conservation Department lands sometimes change, so if you are traveling to an area that you haven’t visited recently, contact the area manager or the on-line Conservation Atlas for the latest information. ▲

## Camping Basics

Basic rules to make your camping trips fun and unforgettable

- Plan for your trip.
- Prepare for unexpected changes in weather.
- Minimize your impact on the land. The best campers are the ones who leave no signs of their passage.
- Respect and enjoy wildlife and plants. Control pets at all times.
- Report anyone abusing our public lands.
- Dispose of all waste properly. Pack out everything that you packed in.
- When hiking or backpacking, carry a good map and compass. Always be aware of your location.
- Be responsible and alert. In the outdoors, help can be difficult to reach.
- Never trespass. Always respect private property.



# 2005 Wildlife Code Changes

Compiled by John W. Smith

Each year, the Regulations Committee of the Missouri Department of Conservation reviews all the rules in the Wildlife Code of Missouri.

The purpose of the annual review is to determine whether the existing regulations continue to fulfill the mission of conserving the state's forest, fish and wildlife resources without unnecessarily regimenting or inconveniencing the public. When specific needs are identified, rule changes are recommended to the Missouri Conservation Commission for approval.

Rule changes that appear in the 2005 Wildlife Code, which should be available by mid-February, become effective March 1, 2005 and are highlighted in this summary. Hunters, anglers and trappers are responsible for understanding the regulations before venturing afield.

## FISHING

Fish may not be taken by gig, crossbow and longbow on the following waters:

- ▲ Barren Fork Creek in Shannon County from County Road A-D to its confluence with Sinking Creek;
- ▲ Blue Springs Creek in Crawford County from Blue Springs to its confluence with the Maramec River;
- ▲ Crane Creek in Stone and Lawrence counties upstream from Quail Spur Crossing on Stone County Road 13-195;
- ▲ Mill Creek in Phelps County from Yelton Spring to its confluence with Little Piney Creek, including Wilkins Spring and spring branch;
- ▲ Spring Creek in Phelps County from Relfe Spring to its confluence with Big Piney River.

Fish taken by gig, crossbow and longbow may not be possessed on these waters or the banks thereof.

- ▲ Fish may be taken by gig, crossbow and longbow in Roubidoux Creek in Pulaski County from the elevated utility crossing approximately one-half mile below Business I-44 Bridge in Waynesville to its confluence with the Gasconade River.

**Trout Daily Limits.** The statewide daily limit for trout is now four trout in the aggregate, unless otherwise restricted. The daily limit is now one trout in:

- ▲ Barren Fork Creek in Shannon County from County Road A-D to its confluence with Sinking Creek;
- ▲ Crane Creek in Stone and Lawrence counties upstream from Quail Spur Crossing on Stone County Road 13-195;
- ▲ Current River and its tributaries from Montauk State Park to Cedar Grove.

The daily limit is now two trout in the Maramec River and its tributaries, except Maramec Spring Branch, in Crawford and Phelps counties from Highway 8 Bridge to Scott's Ford. The daily limit is also two trout in the unimpounded portion of the North Fork of the White River and its tributaries in Ozark County from

Patrick Bridge to Norfork Lake. Also, the daily limit is now two trout on Roubidoux Creek in Pulaski County, from the elevated utility crossing approximately one-half mile below Business I-44 Bridge in Waynesville to its confluence with the Gasconade River.

**Trout Length Limits.** All brown trout less than 15 inches in total length must be released unharmed immediately after being caught from the unimpounded portion of any stream, unless otherwise restricted.

All brown trout and all rainbow trout less than 18 inches in total length must be released unharmed immediately after being caught from:

- ▲ Barren Fork Creek in Shannon County from County Road A-D to its confluence with Sinking Creek;
- ▲ Crane Creek in Stone and Lawrence counties upstream from Quail Spur Crossing on Stone County Road 13-195;
- ▲ Current River and its tributaries from Montauk State Park to Cedar Grove;
- ▲ North Fork of the White River and its tributaries in Ozark County from the upper outlet of Rainbow Spring to Patrick Bridge.

**Trout Permits.** A trout permit is required in addition to the prescribed fishing permit for fishing at:

- ▲ Maramec Spring Trout Park, Bennett Spring State Park, Montauk State Park and Roaring River State Park from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from the second Friday in November through the second Sunday in February;
- ▲ Stone Mill Spring Branch in Pulaski County from November 1 through February 28;
- ▲ Lake Taneycomo from the closed fishing zone, which is 760 feet below Table Rock Dam, downstream to the U.S. Highway 65 Bridge.

**Trout Parks.** The daily limit is four trout, and no person shall continue to fish for any species after having four trout in possession.

From March 1 through October 31, no person with four trout already in possession may fish on the designated portions of Montauk State Park and Roaring River State Park where catch-and-release fishing only is permitted.

**Stone Mill Spring Branch.** Fishing is permitted on designated waters during posted hours. All anglers must have a valid trout permit. Not more than one pole and line may be used by one person at any time. Giggling, snaring, snagging, and the taking of live bait are prohibited. Flies, artificial lures, unscented soft plastic baits and natural and scented baits may be used, except in waters posted as restricted to specific baits or lures. The use of any foods to attract fish, except when placed on a hook, is prohibited.

Trout fishing is permitted from March 1 through October 31. The daily limit is four trout, and no person shall continue to fish for any species after having four trout in possession.

Trout fishing is also permitted from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from November 1 through the last day in February as posted. Only flies



and artificial lures may be used, and all fish must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught. Fish may not be possessed on these waters.

**Live Bait (Frogs).** Bullfrogs and green frogs taken and possessed under statewide seasons and limits may be used as bait. The daily limit remains eight bullfrogs and green frogs in the aggregate. The daily limit for southern leopard frog, plains leopard frog and cricket frog is five each.

**Experimental Hand Fishing Season.** An experimental hand fishing season for catfish has been approved for 2005 as part of a five-year study to determine the effects of hand fishing on catfish populations, and whether such a season should be established in the long term.

To hand fish in Missouri, you must obtain a Hand Fishing Permit (\$7) in addition to the prescribed fishing permit, unless exempt. You must also submit, within 10 days following the close of the season, a complete report on a form furnished by the Department. Failure to submit an accurate and complete annual report shall be sufficient cause for denial of a hand fishing permit the following year.

The hand fishing season will run from sunrise to sunset, June 1 through July 15.

The daily limit is five channel, blue or flathead catfish, in the aggregate. The minimum length limit is 22 inches for flathead and blue catfish. There is no minimum length limit for channel catfish.

Only waters that are also open to commercial fishing for catfish, or closely tied to such waters, have been opened to hand fishing. These areas are:

- ▲ Fabius River system from the mouth to the Highway 61 bridges, and the South Fabius River in Marion County from the Highway 61 Bridge upstream to Dunn Ford Access;
- ▲ Mississippi River from the mouth of the Fabius River upstream to the mouth of the Des Moines River;
- ▲ That part of the St. Francis River that forms the boundary between the states of Arkansas and Missouri.

Feet and bare hands may be used without the aid of hooks or other man-made devices. Catfish may be taken by hand fishing only from natural objects or natural cavities. Catfish may not be taken from any man-made object from bona fide construction such as bridges, docks, boat ramps and rock rip rap. No part of any object may be disturbed or altered to harvest a catfish by hand. Hand fishers may not possess fishing equipment, except a stringer, while on designated hand fishing waters or adjacent banks.

## HUNTING

**Fall Firearms Turkey Hunting.** The fall firearms turkey hunting season will be October 1 through October 31 annually. The season limit of two turkeys of either sex remains unchanged for the fall

season, but both turkeys may now be taken on the same day.

**Fall Firearms Deer Hunting.** The November portion of the 2005 firearms deer hunting season will open November 12. The closing date and dates for other deer season segments will be announced in early summer.

**Tree Stands on Conservation Department Areas.** Only portable tree stands are allowed and only from September 1 through January 31. Unattended stands must be plainly labeled with the owner's name and address on a durable material. Use of screw-in steps and any material or method that would damage the tree is prohibited.

**Hound Running Areas.** A hound running area approved after March 1, 2005, must be at least 40 acres in size. Foxes and coyotes may be held in temporary confinement facilities on the hound running area or another location specified on the permit.

**Groundhogs.** Legally obtained groundhog pelts may be possessed and sold throughout the year.

**Pheasants.** Male pheasants may be taken from November 1 through January 15 north of Interstate 70, and also in that portion of St. Charles County lying south of Interstate 70.

**Waterfowl Hunting.** Effective in fall 2005, waterfowl hunting will be allowed during prescribed seasons on designated portions of Lone Jack Conservation Area until 1 p.m. daily.

Waterfowl hunting Units 1 and 2 at Four Rivers Conservation Area have been added to the list of areas managed by daily drawing, where waterfowl may be taken only by holders of a valid area Daily Waterfowl Hunting Tag and only in a designated area.

On Units 3 and 4 of Four Rivers Conservation Area, waterfowl hunters must pre-register and check out daily at designated hunter record boxes prior to and immediately after completing the hunt, but there is no daily drawing for hunting those units.

Only authorized persons are allowed within the waterfowl shooting areas during the waterfowl hunting season.

## TARGET SHOOTING

**Target Shooting and Shooting Ranges on Conservation Department Areas.** Shooting hours on unmanned ranges are one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Transgenics.** The release of transgenic fish or wildlife into the wild is prohibited without written authorization of the director. Transgenic fish or wildlife may be possessed and used only as authorized by the Wildlife Code (3 CSR 10-9.110). "Transgenic" is defined in the Wildlife Code as any organism, or progeny thereof, that contains DNA from a species that was not a parent of that organism.



## Missouri Tree Farmers Confer

The Missouri State Tree Farm Committee invites all woodland owners to attend the conference's silver anniversary Feb. 25-26 at the Stoney Creek Inn in Columbia.

The conference will start Friday afternoon with a Woodland Estate Planning Workshop by Dr. Bill Hoover of Purdue University. That evening, landowners will share woodland management experiences.

Saturday presentations will focus on selecting the right tree for your property, exotic plant threats in Missouri, pruning high-value forest trees and the health of Missouri forests. The conference will conclude with a forum on quail management.

Early registration fee is \$45 for Tree Farm members, \$50 for non-members. For more information, contact Glenda Fry, the Missouri Forest Products Association Education Coordinator, at 573/634-3252, or e-mail [Glenda@moforest.org](mailto:Glenda@moforest.org).

## Think "location" in quail estate, too



Every homeowner knows the three most important factors in determining the value of a house are location, location and location. The same is true for quail real estate. Keep this in mind when creating "covey headquarters."

Covey headquarters are brushy areas where bobwhites can escape from predators. The ideal area is about 1,500 square feet. It should be at least 20 feet wide, with a combination of brushpiles and upright shrubby growth, such as American plum, shrub dogwood, blackberry or indigo bush. These plants allow quail to move around without fear of hawks, but also allow them to fly away from foxes and other land-based predators.

The value of covey headquarters is diminished if it is not near other suitable bobwhite habitat. The best site is near the corner of a field with row crops, food plots or lightly disked grassland on one side, and well-managed, wildlife-friendly grassland nearby.

For more information about managing land for quail and other wildlife that thrives in open land, subscribe to the Conservation Department's "Covey Headquarters." The quarterly newsletter is available online at [www.coveyheadquarters.com](http://www.coveyheadquarters.com). To receive the newsletter by mail, write to Covey Headquarters, Missouri Department of Conservation, 3915 Oakland Ave., St. Joseph, MO 64506.

## VOLUNTEERS REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Nadine Marshall, middle, and Carolyn Brunner have done what no other volunteers at Runge Conservation Nature Center in Jefferson City have done before. Each of the devoted conservationists has donated 5,000 hours of their time to share nature with others.

Marshall has been volunteering since 1995. Brunner began her career as a volunteer naturalist in 1992. The pair, with the help of fellow volunteer Golda Trower, developed one of the state's most popular nature center programs, called "The Wild-lifers." It blends nature learning with quilt making.



## NWTF honors Chillicothe man

Max Hamilton of Chillicothe, a citizen conservationist and outdoor communicator, has been honored by the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF).

The NWTF named a room at its new headquarters in Edgefield, S.C., in honor of Hamilton, whose conservation career included service as NWTF's chairman of the board and president.

Hamilton served as outdoor editor for the *Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune* for more than 50 years before retiring in 1994. He helped found the NWTF's Chillicothe chapter and has worked for more than 60 years to make his farm northwest of Chillicothe a model for wildlife management.





## VULTURE VENTURE RETURNS

Missouri's most unusual wildlife viewing opportunity will take place Feb. 26 at the Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery in Branson. This year's "Vulture Venture" will run from noon to 6 p.m.

Indoor attractions include a live vulture from the Wonders of Wildlife Museum in Springfield, a video about vultures, vulture games, stickers and crafts. Outside, visitors will meet naturalists with spotting scopes and view one of Missouri's largest vulture wintering roosts. This is a rare opportunity to see both black and turkey vultures in the same location.

Visitors who stay until late in the afternoon are treated to vulture "kettling" as large numbers of the big birds swoop in to roost for the night. This is a free program and requires no reservations. For more information or for directions, call 417/334-4865, ext 0.

Last year's event received the National Association of Interpretation's Best Interpretive Program award.

## Teacher workshops branch out



If you are pursuing an education degree, have a strong professional interest in conservation or want to enrich your teaching, consider signing up for one of the Conservation Department's educator workshops. Many workshops offer college credit. Non-credit workshops are free, or require only a small registration fee.

New this year is a workshop titled, "Comparative Ecology: Invaders vs. Natives." Participants will use hands-on strategies to explore the effects of invasive exotic species on native plants and animals, such as warm-season grasses and quail.

Other new workshops include "Endangered Species and You: The Biodiversity Connection," and "Life Sports for Educators."

Perennial favorites include workshops on insects, mammals, outdoor classrooms, Lewis and Clark and Project WILD. For a complete list, visit [www.mdc.mo.gov/teacher/workshops/](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/teacher/workshops/) or write to Publications Staff, Missouri Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.

## Calling all boaters

The St. Louis America's Center will host the 51st annual St. Louis Boat and Sport Show Feb. 22-27.

The show will feature boats, motors, marine accessories, hunting and fishing gear and vacation destinations. Seminars and guest speakers will appeal to every age and interest. Hours are 5-10 p.m. Tuesday; 2-10 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday; noon to 10 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday; and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Admission is \$8 for adults, \$2 for children under 12. Children 5 and under get in free Friday if accompanied by adults. Further information is available at [www.stlouisboatshow.com](http://www.stlouisboatshow.com).

## Deer Classic events scheduled

The Missouri Show-Me Big Bucks Club has expanded its annual Deer Classic and Wildlife Extravaganza to five events around the state this year.

Each event will run from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and will feature informative seminars and displays by equipment makers, taxidermists and related businesses. Hunters can bring their trophies to be scored by qualified experts, and a trophy display board will be available for hunters to show off their deer mounts.

Admission is \$5. Children 12 and younger get in free. Proceeds from the events will be divided between the Big Bucks Club and local sponsors. Dates, sponsors and exhibitor contact information are:

- ▲ Feb. 12 at the East Carter County School, Ellsinore, 573/322-5653.
- ▲ Feb. 19 at Trinity Lutheran School, Jefferson City, 573/751-9000.
- ▲ Feb. 26 at the Clark County Care Building, Kahoka, 660/945-3715, ext. 254.
- ▲ March 5 at Chillicothe High School, 660/646-8488.
- ▲ March 12 at Lakeland School, Deepwater 417/644-2223.





## Goose control workshops offered in St. Louis area

In February, Missourians with problem geese can learn how to avoid and reduce conflicts with giant Canada geese at workshops in the St. Louis area.

GeesePeace St. Louis, a non-profit group that promotes non-lethal solutions to nuisance goose problems, is offering the workshops in cooperation with the Conservation Department. Participants learn population stabilization techniques, like egg addling and oiling. The workshops also cover the use of landscaping, trained dogs, chemical repellents and no-feeding policies in an integrated goose management plan. Attendance costs \$8. Workshops will be offered:

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| • Feb. 9 and 19 at the Wildlife<br>Rescue Center, Ballwin. | • Feb. 26 at Powder Valley<br>Conservation Nature Center,<br>Kirkwood. | • March 3 at August A. Busch<br>Memorial Conservation Area, St.<br>Charles. |
|--|--|---|

For more information, call 314/567-2081, or visit the GeesePeace Web site, [www.geesepeacestlouis.org](http://www.geesepeacestlouis.org).

## Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest deadline is March 15

Entries for the 2005 Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest are due March 15. Students in grades K-12 are eligible to create art of Missouri waterfowl for the contest, which is sponsored by Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge. For more information, visit <http://duckstamps.fws.gov/junior/junior.htm>, or contact Tim Haller, Big Muddy NWR, 4200 New Haven Drive, Columbia, MO 65201, 573/441-2799.

## Urban deer harvest skyrockets in second year

A record number of Missouri hunters took advantage of the state's second urban portion of firearms deer season Oct. 8-11, taking 1,955 deer and donating tons of venison to needy families.

The hunt took place in 11 counties around St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield and the Columbia/Jefferson City area. One-hundred fifty successful participants donated their deer to the Share the Harvest program, which channels venison to food banks and other charitable organizations.

Last year's urban portion of firearms deer season lasted only two days and was limited to the areas around St. Louis and Kansas City. Initial harvest figures last year showed 91 deer brought to check stations in the hunt areas. However, this number did not include 43 deer brought to check stations outside the area. These boosted the final tally to 134. This year's urban segment total also will increase when deer checked outside the hunt area are taken into account, possibly topping 2,800.

This record harvest is good news for communities that want to reduce deer numbers.



## Be part of the bobwhite recovery

Each of the Conservation Department's eight regions is developing a Regional Quail Recovery Plan. To learn how you can get involved, contact the regional office in St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, Columbia, Kirksville, St. Joseph, Cape Girardeau or West Plains.

## Fishing legend Virgil Ward dies

Fishing legend Virgil Ward, who put fishing lore in television viewers minds and fishing lures in their hands, died in September at age 93. He hosted the nationally syndicated "Championship Fishing" from 1964 to 1990, reaching anglers on 300 stations. The soft-spoken angling celebrity also invented fishing lures, including the Beetle Spin, which are used by millions of anglers. Ward lived near Amsterdam, Mo.

## BIG, BIG FISH!

A new state-record trout has been registered. In August 2004, Jason Harper of Neosho landed an 18-pound, 1-ounce rainbow trout at Roaring River State Park. His fish demolished the previous record of 16 pounds, 13 ounces, set in 1987, also at Roaring River. The 30 1/8-inch lunger fell for a silver spoon. The 22-year-old angler had his hands full landing the fish on 4-pound-test line. The fish had a girth of 22 5/8 inches.

Anglers who dream of landing a huge catfish should note the case of James Edmiston, of Shawnee, Kan. In August, he caught an 82-pound blue cat on the Missouri River along Missouri's western border. Although he surely must have been pleased, it wasn't the once-in-a-lifetime fish it would have been for most anglers. He caught a 92-pounder—the Kansas state record—in 2000.





## Forsyth team wins forestry event

The Forsyth High School Forestry Team earned top honors in October at the National FFA Forestry Career Development Event.

All four members of the team placed in the top 10 in the competition. Juniors Cole Wyatt and Nathan Storts placed first and third, respectively. Senior Casey Williams placed fourth, and Junior Adam Johnson came in ninth.

They became only the second team in Missouri history to win the title. The event tests contestants' knowledge of forest management tools, principles and techniques, tree identification, forest inventorying, tree disorders and safety.

John Wyatt, Cole's father and the team's sponsor, said the four budding foresters spent hours before and after school studying and training for the competition at the national FFA convention in Louisville, Ky.

Eric Ray McKenzie, Keytesville, and Benjamin Thomas French, Fulton, also distinguished themselves at the event by winning Wildlife Production Proficiency Awards.

## Huge deer could be state record



Next time you hear someone say big bucks only live on private land, show them this photo of Scott Fowler. He killed this deer with bow and arrow Sept. 18 at Poosey Conservation Area (CA) in Livingston County.

Fowler, a Florida resident, travels to Missouri each year to scout and hunt. He pursued this deer for five years after

finding one of its shed antlers in 1999. He saw it several times thereafter, and he even filmed it on video.

When it fell, the deer weighed an estimated 230 pounds, field-dressed. Fowler chose not to have the antlers "green scored." Instead, he decided to wait until the end of the 60-day drying period prescribed by the Pope and Young Club to have it measured. It could challenge Missouri's all-time archery hunting record of 191 inches.

Bill Wehrle, who interviewed Fowler for an article that appeared in the *Chillicothe Constitution-Tribune*, said that Fowler hunts only public land, and he hunts only with a bow. He doesn't use tree stands. Fowler also said that the Sept. 15 opener for archery deer season helps archers because bucks' activity still revolves around food then, making them easier to pattern.

Fowler's deer was feeding in a soybean field when it fell.

Wehrle also said this is the fifth deer Fowler has taken at Poosey CA that qualified for Pope and Young certification.

## Federal funds aid bird conservation

State Wildlife Grants are a new source of federal funding for state wildlife programs. The focus is on helping species with urgent needs before they become endangered.

Local partners are an important part of this effort. Last year, the Conservation Department channeled \$210,000 of these federal funds into local efforts through the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative. Matching grants of up to \$20,000 went to:

- ▲ The Burroughs Audubon Society and Audubon Missouri for Missouri River corridor marsh and forest restoration in central Missouri.
- ▲ The Otahki Girl Scout Council for Otahki Woodland restoration.
- ▲ The Ruffed Grouse Society, Quail Unlimited (QU), Enterprise Leasing and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) for the River Hills Forest Project.
- ▲ The Missouri Waterfowl Association, Audubon Missouri, Ducks Unlimited and the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF) for Truman Lake wetland restoration.
- ▲ The Missouri Prairie Foundation and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for Grassland Coalition work in southwestern Missouri.
- ▲ The Missouri Prairie Foundation for tallgrass prairie acquisition in northern Missouri.
- ▲ A private landowner and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for savanna and glade restoration on private land.
- ▲ The Missouri Native Plant Society, Columbia Audubon, the University of Missouri and a private landowner for prairie restoration near Columbia.
- ▲ Springfield Audubon and TNC for prairie restoration at Wah'Kon-Tah Prairie.
- ▲ Intercounty Electric Cooperative, a private landowner and the NWTF for habitat improvements along powerline rights-of-way in the Ozarks.
- ▲ The Benton County Soil and Water Conservation District and the MCHF for equipment for warm-season grass restoration.
- ▲ The City of Rolla, Ozark Rivers Audubon and QU for grassland and savanna restoration.
- ▲ Kansas City WildLands and Jackson County Parks and Recreation for removing honeysuckle and planting trees.
- ▲ The National Waterfowl Association for levee construction and shorebird and waterfowl marsh restoration at B.K. Leach Conservation Area.
- ▲ St. Louis Audubon, St. Louis County Parks and the FWS for marsh habitat restoration in Creve Coeur.
- ▲ QU for habitat management equipment.



## Outdoor Calendar

### Hunting

	open	close
Coyotes	5/10/04	3/31/05
Crow	11/1/04	3/3/05
Deer Archery	9/15/05	to be announced
Deer Firearms	11/12/05	to be announced
Furbearers	11/15/04	2/15/05
Groundhog	5/9/05	12/15/05
Rabbits	10/1/04	2/15/05
Squirrels	5/22/04	2/15/05
Turkey (spring)	4/18/05	5/08/05
Youth Resident	4/9/05	4/10/05

### Fishing

Black Bass (most southern streams)	5/22/04	2/28/05
Bullfrog	sunset	midnight
	6/30/05	10/31/05
Nongame Fish Snagging	3/15/05	5/15/05
Paddlefish	3/15/05	4/30/05
Paddlefish on the Mississippi River	3/15/05	5/15/05
Trout Parks		
catch and release (Fri.–Sun.)	11/12/04	2/13/05

### Trapping

Beaver	11/15/04	3/31/05
Furbearers	11/15/04	2/15/05
Otters and Muskrats	11/15/04	varies

See regulations for otter zones, limits and dates

For complete information about seasons, limits, methods and restrictions, consult the Wildlife Code and the current summaries of Missouri Hunting and Trapping Regulations and Missouri Fishing Regulations, the Fall Deer and Turkey Hunting Information, Waterfowl Hunting Digest and the Migratory Bird Digest. To find this information on our Web site go to <http://www.missouriconservation.org/regs/>.

The Conservation Department's computerized point-of-sale system allows you to purchase or replace your permits through local vendors or by phone. The toll-free number is 800/392-4115. Allow 10 days for delivery of telephone purchases. To purchase permits online go to <http://www.wildlifelicenses.com/mo/>.



**OPERATION  
GAME THIEF**  
1-800-392-1111

## AGENT NOTEBOOK

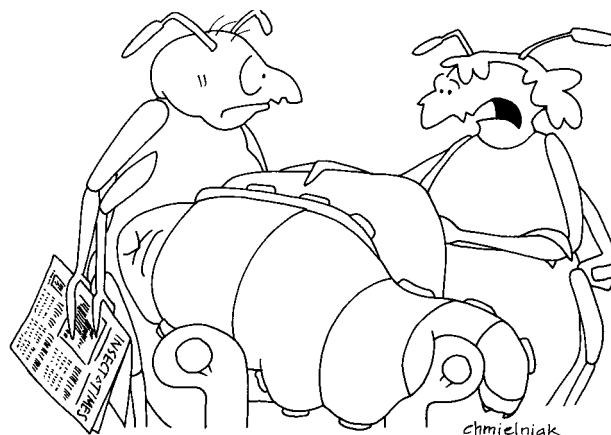
**Part of my job** through the years has been to investigate spring turkey accidents. I interview the shooter and victim (hopefully) and reconstruct the scene. This helps me get a sense of the series of events that led to the accident.

At the end of each year, the Conservation Department compiles a list of all reported hunting accidents and their causes. This data helps us in teaching hunter education and in learning how accidents can be prevented.

A few years ago, I compiled the statewide statistics for spring turkey hunting accidents over the past 5 years. They really surprised me. I had always assumed that most hunting accidents involved inexperienced hunters. However, most of the "mistaken for game" spring turkey hunting incidents involved shooters and victims in their late 30s. On average, the people involved have about 10 years of turkey hunting experience and 25 years of overall hunting experience.

Many hunters fall into this general category, but I wondered why a few of them have accidents. Somehow, they assumed that a color or movement they spotted in the woods was a turkey instead of another hunter. They then committed the unforgivable error of shooting without positively identifying their target.

When I hear about an accident, I always ask myself, "How could this have happened?" If all hunters asked themselves the same question, we could eliminate hunting accidents. —Chuck Griffin

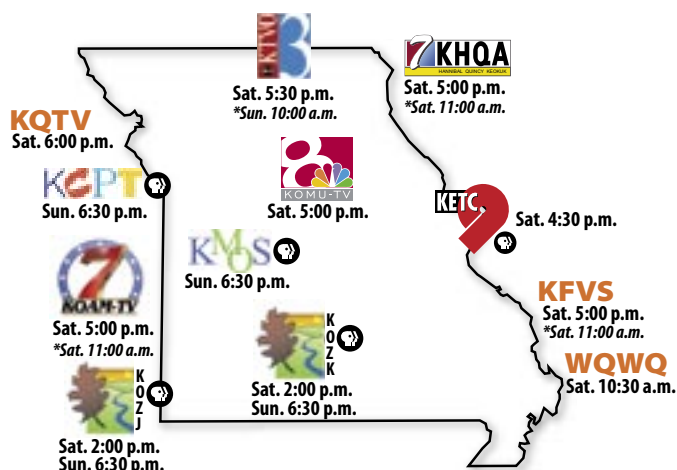


"I just can't believe our dear, sweet, lovable larva has developed into this sullen, sleepy, obnoxious pupa!"



## Program Schedule

Television the way Nature intended!



\*Alternate time if pre-empted by other programming

<b>St. Louis</b>	KETC	(Ch 9 PBS)	Sat. 4:30 p.m.
<b>Kansas City</b>	KCPT	(Ch 19 PBS)	Sun. 6:30 p.m.
<b>Springfield</b>	KOZK	(Ch 21 PBS)	Sat. 2:00 p.m. Sun. 6:30 p.m.
<b>Warrensburg</b>	KMOS	(Ch 6 PBS)	Sun. 6:30 p.m.
<b>Joplin</b>	KOZJ	(Ch 26 PBS)	Sat. 2:00 p.m. Sun. 6:30 p.m.
	KOAM	(Ch 7 CBS)	Sat. 5:00 p.m.
<b>Cape Girardeau</b>	KFVS	(Ch 12 CBS)	Sat. 5:00 p.m.
	WQWQ	(Ch. 9/24 UPN)	Sat. 10:30 a.m.
<b>Columbia</b>	KOMU	(Ch 8 NBC)	Sat. 5:00 p.m.
<b>Hannibal</b>	KHQA	(Ch 7 CBS)	Sat. 5:00 p.m.
<b>Kirkville</b>	KTVO	(Ch 3 ABC)	Sat. 5:30 p.m.
<b>St. Joseph</b>	KQTV	(Ch 2 ABC)	Sat. 6:00 p.m.

### OTHER OUTLETS

**Branson** Vacation Channel  
**Brentwood** Brentwood City TV  
**Cape Girardeau** Charter Cable Ed. Ch. 23  
**Chillicothe** Time Warner Cable Channel 6  
**Hillsboro** JCTV  
**Independence** City 7  
**Joplin** KGCS  
**Kearney** Unite Cable  
**Maryland Heights** Cable America 10  
**Mexico** Mex-TV  
**Noel** TTV  
**O'Fallon** City of O'Fallon Cable  
**Parkville** City of Parkville  
**Perryville** PVTV

**Raymore** Govt. Access-Channel 7  
**Raytown** City of Raytown Cable  
**St. Charles** City of St. Charles-Ch 20  
**St. Louis** Charter Communications  
**St. Louis** City TV 10  
**St. Louis** Cooperating School Districts  
**St. Louis** DHTV-21  
**St. Louis** KPTN-LP/TV58  
**St. Peters** City of St. Peters Cable  
**Ste. Genevieve** Public TV  
**Springfield** KBLE36  
**Sullivan** Fidelity Cable-Channel 6  
**Union** TRC-TV7  
**West Plains** OCTV

## Meet Our Contributors



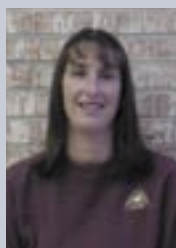
**Mike Bayless** stays busy with his daughter and three sons, who are all involved in sports. He also stays busy chasing ducks, turkeys, and fish. He says he most enjoys introducing his children to the wonders of Missouri's woods and waters.

Fisheries Programs Coordinator **Mike Kruse** worked with a large number of Department employees to develop "A Plan for Missouri Trout Fishing." He now serves as the Department's Trout Plan Coordinator and liaisons with trout angling groups. He's an avid angler and enjoys fly fishing.



**Barry Rabe** has sampled camping areas at hundreds of conservation areas and river accesses. He is currently employed by the Department of Natural Resources. Barry spends most of his free time exploring the rivers and wilderness areas of the Ozarks in Missouri and Arkansas with his dog, Baloo.

Conservation Department Resource Forester **Brian Schweiss** works in Macon. He's always enjoyed working in the woods and helping people manage their forest land. He likes to hunt and fish and improve wildlife habitat on his own land. His current project is teaching his wife and two children how to fish.



Fisheries Management Biologist **Trish Yasger** is from Wisconsin but has worked for the Conservation Department for 15 years. She manages the fisheries of Truman Lake and other lakes around Sedalia and serves as the Paddlefish Plan Coordinator. She enjoys fishing, gardening and bicycling.



To learn about bobwhite quail management and Missouri's quail recovery efforts, check out

[www.missouriconservation.org](http://www.missouriconservation.org)

**Keyword: quail**



## Easy Meal

A juvenile red-shouldered hawk stands over a crappie on the bank of the Osage River below Bagnell Dam. One of the many bald eagles wintering below the dam had dropped the fish. The hawk was so intent on taking advantage of this opportunistic meal that I was able to approach it and take its picture. —*Jim Rathert*